

Religious Voices in Broadcasting

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September 15, 2004

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445 12th Street, S.W., 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Multicast Must-Carry, CS Docket No. 98-120

Dear Chairman Powell:

On behalf of Religious Voices in Broadcasting, a group of full-power religious broadcasters, we are writing to express our surprise in your response to a question posed by Senator Bill Nelson on multicast must-carry during the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation hearing on September 8, 2004. In April 2003 the Religious Voices in Broadcasting met with you to discuss the importance of multicast must-carry for preserving local, spiritual, family-friendly and community focused programming. During that meeting you expressed clear support for broadcasters receiving multicasting rights in digital television (exclusive of the dual must-carry agenda that was being promoted by NAB) and affirmatively recognized the valuable diversity of programming that we contribute. Specifically, you said that if it were up to you, you would give broadcasters multicast must-carry and that you had overcome, with some trepidation, concerns over the FCC's authority to implement multicast must-carry requirements.

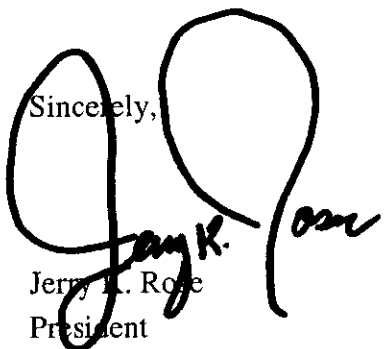
Therefore, we were somewhat taken aback by your statement in last week's hearing where you suggested that multicasting would not necessarily be an "advantage" to the transition, and that some argue it might even retard it. Your statement contradicts what we had previously discussed regarding the importance of multicast must-carry for speeding the transition and particularly for providing small, independent and emerging

broadcasters access to advanced technology to compete in the digital television marketplace. You also stated that there was not consensus at the Commission on the reconsideration. As you are aware, Commissioner Martin has made public statements in support of multicast must-carry and Commissioner Abernathy has clearly stated her intent to vote for multicast must-carry, an assertion that she has assured us was made to your office. While Commissioner Copps and Adelstein have asked that public interest standards be resolved before must-carry, they have not indicated opposition to multicast must-carry.

Consequently, we are concerned that the Commission will continue to prolong its reconsideration of CS Docket 98-120 to the detriment of broadcasters, particularly small and religious owners, and would encourage you to consider this issue in a timely manner so that the uncertainties surrounding the digital transition for our stations can be resolved. **In this regard, we would like to request a meeting with you to further discuss the issue.**

Thank you for your time. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Jerry K. Rose
President

Total Living Network,
Illinois, California and Nevada



Ken Mikesell
President
WTGL, Florida



Jamey Schmitz
General Manager & CEO
WLMB, Toledo



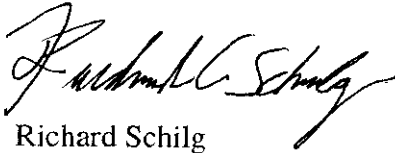
Dr. James Thompson
President
Carolina Broadcasting & WATC,
South Carolina and Georgia



Kevin Bowers
President
WTLW, Ohio



Rich Hawkins
General Manager
WLLA, Michigan



Richard Schilg
General Manager
WSFJ, Ohio



Mike Reed
President
KMCT, Louisiana



Garth Coonce
President
TCT Ministries,
Illinois and Michigan



Blackie Gonzalez
President
Son Broadcasting, New Mexico



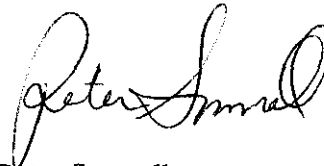
Grace Rendall
General Manager
KSCE, Texas



Robert D'Andrea
President
Christian Television Network,
Florida and Kentucky



Mike Smith
President & CEO
Living Faith Television,
Virginia



Peter Sumrall
President
Le Sea Broadcasting,
Hawaii, Colorado and Indiana

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shelby Gillam', with a stylized, cursive script.

Shelby Gillam

President

Christian Faith Broadcast, Inc.,

Michigan and Ohio

Cc: Commissioner Kevin Martin

Commissioner Michael Copps

Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy

Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein